

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the present application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A liquid-cooled casting die for [[a]] continuous billet casting comprising:

a form-giving casting die body (1) having at least one broad side wall with a pouring-surface for receiving molten metal in a pouring direction, and defining a meniscus region (3) and a cooling-surface in contact with a cooling bath, the pouring-surface and the cooling-surface defining a thickness, and cooling bore holes running parallel to the pouring direction and at least one of running closer to the pouring surface, being configured narrower, and being spaced closer in at least one portion of the die body

~~wherein the casting die body (1) has a cooling zone in the meniscus region (3) with a heat flow rate of 5-40% greater than the heat flow rate in adjacent regions of the casting die body (1).~~

2. (Previously Presented) The casting die body (1) as recited in claim 1, wherein the form-giving casting die body is made of copper or a copper alloy.

3. (Currently Amended) The casting die body (1) as recited in claim 1, further comprising a die cavity (2) defined by two broad-side walls situated opposite each other and two narrow-side walls, the narrow-side walls forming a cross-section of the die cavity; ~~said broad-side walls connected to a base and forming the meniscus region (3).~~

4. (Previously Presented) The casting die body (1) as recited in claim 3, wherein the cross-section of the die cavity (2) at a first end is greater than at a second end.

5. (Currently Amended) The casting die body (1) as recited in claim ~~[[4]]~~ 3, wherein the broad-side walls further define a funnel running from the first end to the second end and the at least one portion of the die body including sides of the funnel.

6. (Currently Amended) The casting die body (1) as recited in claim 5 ~~[[1]]~~, wherein the ~~cooling-zone~~ at least one portion extends to cover an area that is at least 20% more than the sides of the funnel ~~meniscus region (3).~~

7. (Currently Amended) The casting die body (1) as recited in claim 5 ~~[[6]]~~, wherein the ~~cooling-zone~~ at least one portion extends to cover an area that is 30-60% more than the sides of the funnel ~~meniscus region (3).~~

Claims 8 to 9. (Cancelled).

10. (Currently Amended) The casting die body (1) as recited in claim 1, wherein the thickness separating the pouring-surface from the cooling-surface is reduced in ~~the meniscus region (3)~~ the at least one portion of the die body.

11. (Currently Amended) The casting die body (1) as recited in claim 10, wherein the thickness is reduced by 1 to 6 mm ~~in the meniscus region (3).~~

12. (Currently Amended) The casting die body (1) as recited in claim 1, wherein the cooling surface comprises a plurality of cooling channels (4) ~~having a depth (6), the depth of the cooling channels being at least 20% more (d2) in the meniscus region (3) than the adjacent areas (d1).~~

Claim 13. (Cancelled).

14. (Currently Amended) The casting die as recited in claim 12, wherein the cooling channels ~~become gradually narrower in a transitional area (C)~~ are narrower on both sides of the funnel.

15. (Currently Amended) The casting die as recited in claim 12, wherein ~~between the coolant channels, additional~~ cooling bore holes are arranged between the cooling channels (4).

16. (New) A liquid-cooled casting die for a continuous billet casting comprising:

a form-giving casting die body (1) having at least one broad side wall with a pouring-surface for receiving molten metal in a pouring direction, a cooling-surface in contact with a cooling bath, the pouring-surface and the cooling-surface defining a thickness, and cooling bore holes running parallel to the pouring direction and being spaced at least 20% closer in at least one portion of the die body, wherein the broad-side walls define a funnel having sides, the at least one portion of the die body including the sides.